

Appl. No. : 10/521,372
Filed : January 12, 2005

REMARKS

Claims 1, 4, and 9 have been amended to clarify the invention. Support can be found in the drawings, for example. No new matter has been added. Applicant respectfully requests entry of the amendments and reconsideration of the application in view of the amendments and the following remarks.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-4 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Shimoji. Claims 1 is independent. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Claim 1 as amended herein recites:

(i) a connection member has one or more through-holes each for slidably guiding an optical fiber therethrough and guides each for slidably guiding a rodlike coupling member therethrough, said through-holes and said guides extending from one side edge to another;

(ii) said connection member is arranged slidably in said plug by being installed in the concavity of square U-shape of said plug by means of each rodlike coupling member inserted both in the plug and the connection member.

In contrast, first, in Shimoji, the connection member (6) does not have one or more through-holes each for slidably guiding an optical fiber therethrough. In the connection member (6), the optical fiber is immobile.

Second, in Shimoji, the through-holes for optical fibers (12) and the guides (17) of the connection member (6) do not extend from one side edge to another.

Third, in Shimoji, each rodlike coupling member (16) is not inserted both in the plug (3) and the connection member (6). The coupling member (16) is inserted in the connection member (6) only.

In view of the above, clearly, Shimoji does not teach each and every element as set forth in claim 1 and thus could not anticipate claim 1. At least for this reason, Shimoji could not anticipate dependent claims 2-4. Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of this rejection.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

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Claims 6-7 and 9-10 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shimoji and further in view of Gehri. Claims 6 and 9 are independent. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Claims 6 and 9 recite the limitations discussed above with respect to claim 1. First, in Gehri, like Shimoji, the connection member (17) does not have one or more through-holes each for slidably guiding an optical fiber therethrough. In Gehri, unlike the claimed invention, the optical fibers is not movable with respect to the connection member (17 or 16), but may be movable with respect to the plug (9b or 8b).

Second, in Gehri, like Shimoji, there is no guide for slidably guiding a rodlike coupling member therethrough, which extends from one side edge to another of the connection member (17).

Third, in Gehri, like Shimoji, there is no rodlike coupling member which is inserted both in the plug (9b) and the connection member (17).

In view of the above, the above discussed features of claims 6 and 9 could be found neither in Shimoji nor in Gehri. Thus, a combination of Shimoji and Gehri could not render claims 6 and 9 obvious. Due to the features recited in claims 6 and 9, positioning of a pair of optical fibers can easily, reliably, and securely be conducted even though the structures are simple. Claims 6 and 9 and dependent claims could not be obvious over Shimoji and Gehri, and Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of this rejection.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 8 and 11 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shimoji and Gehri and further in view of Lee. Claims 8 and 11 depend from claims 6 and 9, respectively. Lee is irrelevant to the features of claims 6 and 9, and thus, a combination of Shimoji, Gehri, and Lee could not render claims 6 and 9 obvious. At least for this reason, dependent claims 8 and 11 also could not be obvious over the references. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

CONCLUSION

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In light of the Applicant's amendments to the claims and the foregoing Remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner have any remaining concerns which might prevent the prompt allowance of the application, the Examiner is respectfully invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number appearing below.

Please charge any additional fees, including any fees for additional extension of time, or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 11-1410.

Respectfully submitted,

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